

Atlantis Set to Land Today

June 22 2007



Astronaut Scott Altman approaches the runway at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., in a Shuttle Training Aircraft to assess landing conditions. Image credit: NASA TV

Flight controllers decided to try landing at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., after weather failed to improve at Kennedy Space Center, Fla.

STS-117 Commander Rick Sturckow and Pilot Lee Archambault are scheduled to perform the deorbit engine burn at 2:43 p.m. to begin the descent for a 3:49 p.m. landing at Edwards.

Rain showers were the reason for the wave off of the first landing attempt at Kennedy. Flight controllers and forecasters with the Spaceflight Meteorology Group continue to monitor the weather at both

landing facilities. Two more opportunities – 5:23 p.m. and 6:59 p.m. -- are available to today at Edwards.

Landing will bring to an end a successful construction mission to the International Space Station. Atlantis launched June 8 and arrived at the station on June 10. While at the orbital outpost, the crew installed the Starboard 3 and 4 truss segment and conducted four spacewalks to activate it. During the third spacewalk, the crew repaired an out of position thermal blanket on the left orbital maneuvering system pod.

Atlantis also delivered a new station crew member, Flight Engineer Clayton Anderson. He replaced astronaut Suni Williams, who is the new record holder for a long-duration single spaceflight for a woman. She arrived at the station in December with STS-116.

STS-117 is the 118th shuttle mission and 21st mission to visit the space station. The next mission, STS-118, is slated to launch in August.

Source: NASA

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